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PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN MAINE.

It is but a few months since we had occasion to indite an article, under the attractive and cheering title, "**PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN VERMONT.**" Longing for new accessions to the Party of Progress, we anxiously inquired, at the close of that article, "When will New Hampshire and Maine wheel into the ranks?"

Maine has answered that inquiry, not by words, but by deeds; not by promise, but by performance. She has joined the party of improvement. She has just established a Board of Education with powers almost identical with those conferred upon the Massachusetts Board of Education, ten years ago;—among others, that of appointing a Secretary, for whom the same amount of salary is provided as was originally given to the Secretary of the Massachusetts Board. Of course, the same sum of money is a more liberal compensation in Maine than in Massachusetts.

Before describing the manner in which the Board is to be constituted, we must pay a well-deserved tribute of gratitude and respect to those agencies and advocates, whose efforts have led to this happy result.

For several years past, able and sincere friends of education, in that State, have been zealously engaged in enlightening the public mind in regard to the necessity of a reform in its Common Schools. The American Institute of Instruction was invited to hold its annual session in Portland, in the year 1844. The meeting was attended by teachers from the remotest parts of the State; and, so far as the numbers and the interest of the audience were concerned, it was one of the best "seasons of refreshing" the Institute has ever enjoyed.

But the steps more proximate to this result were the holding of a State Educational Convention at Augusta, in January last. At this convention, committees were appointed to address the public through the medium of the press, and to prepare a Memorial to the Legislature, in behalf of the cause. An able and somewhat elaborate memorial was accordingly presented to the

Legislature at its recent session. It is signed by Amos Brown, Philip Eastman, A. S. Packard, and Samuel P. Benson, — names which the friends of education will recognize as among the worthiest disciples of the worthiest cause.

We should be glad to transfer the whole of this memorial to our columns ; but as it is a document extending over more than twenty pages, we must content ourselves with a few extracts, showing the premises on which the committee proceeded, and the conclusions to which they came.

"They, [the committee,] know that our State is falling behind most of the New England States in the cause of popular education, and their own State pride, as well as a desire to promote the ends of a system of public instruction, has prompted them to make, in obedience to a call of a respectable meeting of the friends of education, an effort to excite the attention of our community to the more prominent defects in our free school system, or in the proper execution of the system as it already exists. * *

"The following are the more prominent defects in our system. * *

"1. Serious evils in our system of Common Schools arise from the multiplying of school districts. * * 2. Great evils arise from the prevalent inefficiency of school committees. * * 3. The want of suitable qualifications in teachers is a great source of evil. * * 4. The want of a proper classification in our schools is a serious evil. * * 5. The great defect, after all, is the want of a general interest in our free schools. They are not visited except in the way of office, and scarcely so. We take but little pride in them. We are not aware of their importance. A plan, which will certainly be for their advancement, may be rejected, because it may cost a community of 500,000 inhabitants a few hundred dollars, more or less, or increase the tax of an individual a cent more. * *

"There are towns which have omitted altogether to choose school committees. The fine imposed by law for this neglect has been paid again and again on the score of economy. * *

"As it regards the examination of teachers, in how many towns is this examination a mere farce? In how many do they omit even the form of examination? So long as this is so, it is useless to speak of a standard of qualification for teachers ; — there is no such standard. Many teachers are employed in this State, who are wholly incompetent to teach any one branch usually taught in our schools. It could not be so, if the law, even as it is, were executed. * * Teachers are often employed, who have not half learned the branches they profess to teach. This is a fatal evil in our system of schools. No laws, no influence, will make a good school, if the teacher be incompetent ; and this evil will continue to weaken the efficiency of our schools, so long as half-taught young men and women can procure certificates.

"What are the evils of having incompetent teachers? The public money is wasted. The money is raised for the purposes of instruction, which, under incompetent teachers, the children do not receive. Errors are inculcated. An incompetent teacher will teach his scholars many things which they will be obliged to unlearn. Under such a teacher, the children will not be stimulated,—there can be no progress. Pupils must of course be shut up to the field of the knowledge of the teacher. * *

"But the great evil arising from incompetent teachers is, that they bring the free school system into contempt. The object of our free school system is to educate the public mind. It should furnish an education sufficient for the wants of the community at large. But the pernicious practice of cutting up a town into small districts, and of employing incompetent teachers, (and this last practice is a direct and unavoidable consequence of the former,) injures the public schools, and gives rise to private schools. *Short public schools and poor teachers render it necessary, (for those who are able,) to employ private teachers in all our towns and villages.* * *

"Allusion has not yet been made to the moral qualifications of a teacher. What parent would send his children to a school where the teacher was known to have an infectious disease? Better do that than place them under one that is low, vulgar, and impure. If the teacher is corrupt, however fair may be his appearance and manner, his corruption will show itself, and will affect his pupils. Says Mr. Mann, 'If none but teachers of pure taste, of good manners, of exemplary morals, had ever gained admission into our schools, neither the school-rooms nor their appurtenances would have been polluted, as some of them now are, with such ribald inscriptions, and with the carving of such obscene emblems, as would make a heathen blush.' * *

"That something should be done to render effective the means of education now in use in the State, and to provide increased facilities to promote it, is a sentiment very generally admitted. * *

"In these sentiments, we believe the Legislature most deeply sympathize. We dare not impute to them the inconsistency of making a liberal provision for the development of the material resources of the State, in its mineral and vegetable treasures, and yet remaining indifferent to the infinitely greater treasures,—the whole intellectual and moral resources of its future population. What agency, if we except that of religion, is of equal value to man with education, whether it be positively or relatively considered? * *

"It is but a little more than two hundred years since the soil of Massachusetts was covered with a dense forest,—the abode of savage beasts and more savage men; but these have

passed away. In the place of the forest have sprung up flourishing cities, and towns, and villages, containing a population more distinguished for intelligence, and all that subserves our various wants, than any other people on the globe. In that State more than eighty-five thousand persons are engaged in manufactures and trades, which number represents a population of at least three hundred thousand, or six fifteenths of all the inhabitants of the Commonwealth, the annual income of whose labor is about \$90,000,000.

"We marvel at such results; but they are not causeless. Among the first settlers of that colony were men of sagacity and of far-reaching prudence; men who loved their race, and who could forego, if need be, a present enjoyment for a greater future good. Then men taxed themselves for the support of learning in the Commonwealth to a degree, which, tried by the standard of modern benevolence, seems to us like an imaginary tale.

"For the support of her Common Schools, Massachusetts expended, the last year, \$1,000,000. With a territory many times larger, and a population about equal, we expended during the same time, for the same cause, probably not more than \$300,000. * *

"In ancient times, in certain countries bordering on the Mediterranean and Red Seas, the people had attained to a high state of intellectual advancement. These nations were also skilled in many of the arts, and to a considerable degree in husbandry. About the fifth century of the Christian era, the Roman empire, which had for more than five hundred years extended over the known world, was destroyed; consequent upon which, a thousand years of depression and ruin overspread society; in which scarcely a vestige of human effort remains worthy the attention or imitation of succeeding ages. Now, respecting this deplorable result, Mr. Hallam writes, '*In tracing the decline of society from the subversion of the Roman empire, we have been led, not without connection, from ignorance to superstition, from superstition to vice and lawlessness, and from thence to general rudeness and poverty.*' * *

"The Convention of Education in Augusta, the last winter, passed for substance the following resolution: That the time has come for the establishment of a Board of Education in the State, and that its establishment should be demanded of the Legislature, with a power and energy which will not be resisted. The language employed in this resolution, by the convention, is expressive of their deep sense of the utility of the measure which they recommend. They evidently regarded it as a fundamental measure; as the measure upon which the utility of others, tending to the same effect, will mainly depend. * *

"The arguments in favor of this measure have, some of

them, been already adduced. They are found in the defects of the practical operation of our school system, and also in the positive and relative worth of education itself. * *

"Wherever a Board of Education has been established, whether in Europe or this country, it has proved to be highly beneficial. Prussia, in respect to her schools, is the admiration of all intelligent travellers. The same is true, to a degree, of France and Holland. In Prussia, as early as the reign of Elector Joachim the Second, (1546,) visitors were appointed to inspect the town schools of the electorate, with express directions to report in relation to the measures deemed necessary for their improvement. These appointments have been renewed by succeeding rulers, at various times, till the present.

"What is the real social result of all this? How has it affected the population?—for good or for ill? How is it likely to affect them for the future? The narratives given by Pestalozzi, De Fellenberg, Oberlin, and Père Girard, of the singular revolution, mental and moral, I may also add physical, effected by the application of their system of teaching, on a hitherto ignorant and vicious population, though admitted to be isolated experiments, ought not the less to be considered evidences of the intrinsic force of the instrument itself, and of its power to produce similar results wherever and whenever fairly tried, without reference to country or numbers; that is, whenever applied with the same earnestness, honesty, and skill, in other instances as in theirs. And of this portion of Prussia, of the Rhenish province, it may be surely averred, that it has now been for some time under the influence of this system, and that, during that period, whether resulting from such influence or not, its progress in intelligence, industry, and morality,—in the chief elements of virtue and happiness,—has been steadily and strikingly progressive. In few parts of civilized Europe is there more marked exemption from all crimes of violence than in this happy land; not only from those graver delinquencies which stain the calendars of the more luxurious states of Europe, but even from those minor offences against the person, such as riot, assault, &c., from which none scarcely is to be wholly excepted. The safety of the public roads, contrasted with their notorious insecurity in many parts of England, is supported by unequivocal facts. The same abstinence from offences against property is conspicuous in towns. I have already had occasion to refer to the comparative rarity of thieving amongst the lower classes, especially to the diminution of the offence in that very class and age most subject to it in England, and most likely to be influenced by the want or supply, the badness or goodness, of education. There is not only little amount of crime and juvenile offenders, but this amount and number are progressively diminishing. Doubtless much of this most gratifying result may be ascribed to comfort

and employment. But this, again, must be ascribed to some still higher cause. There is comfort because there is frugality; there is employment because there are the desire, and search, and love of it. There is industry, incessant, universal, in every class, from high to low, because there are the early habits of useful occupation; and there are these habits because there is sound and general education. In all those relations of life where truth, honor, confidence, and mutual kindness are most required, — where fraud is most easy, but most injurious, — where reciprocal good faith is of such import, but so easily disturbed, — in all pecuniary, especially in all commercial, transactions, the “*Deutsche Treue*” is more than ever proverbial. A promise is a bond, — a word, an oath. The clergyman admitted that his flock had not become worse Christians for becoming more intelligent men; the officer, that his men had grown more obedient, as they had grown more instructed; — a word now led where a cane formerly was insufficient; the farmer, for the increased profits of his farm, as the manufacturer for those of his factory, thanked the school. Skill had increased, and conduct had improved with knowledge; profits with both. Even household management had reaped its advantage, when the first vanity and presumption arising out of the partial nature of instruction had worn off, — when it had become general, sound, and appropriate. The servant, especially the female servant, was not less faithful, and had become far more useful, than before.

“In Massachusetts, a Board of Education has existed for a period of about eight years. At recent interviews with intelligent gentlemen of that State, the following have been stated as some of the beneficial results of that organization:

“An increased interest in the subject of education among the people of the State generally. As an evidence of this, works on education are more read than formerly; lectures on this subject are more popular; schools are more the topic of conversation at social gatherings and in public conveyances; they have assumed greater importance in the transaction of town affairs; school committees are selected with more caution, the election usually turning in favor of the most intelligent, discreet, and high-minded men; schools are more often visited by parents and others; the office of teacher is more respected. Another result is, that the qualification of teachers has been greatly advanced, and greater pains are taken by teachers to keep themselves informed on all matters relating to their employment. The government of schools is more effective, at the same time its severity has been greatly diminished; teaching is more practical and thorough; a better classification of scholars and greater uniformity of text-books have been secured. Through the influence of District Libraries, a taste for appropriate and useful books has been extensively induced;

the length of schools has been increased on an average one month; schoolhouses have been essentially improved. In some of the more populous towns, elegant edifices have been erected for this use, at an expense of eight and ten thousand dollars each."

This memorial was referred to the Joint Standing Committee on Education, — Hon. E. M. Thurston, chairman, — who, on the 24th June last, made a Report in conformity with the prayer of the memorialists, accompanied by a Bill, which has since become a law. It passed the Senate by a vote of 20 to 8, and the House by a vote of 112 to 11.

By the Act, the Board of Education consists of one member for each county, — fourteen in the whole.

The superintending school committee of each county, annually assembled at the shire town of the county, constitute a college of electors for choosing a member of the Board for the county to which they belong.

The meetings of the several school committees for the choice of a member of the Board, are to be held on different days, with an interval of several days between; and it is made the duty of the Secretary of the Board, as far as practicable, to attend the annual meetings of the committees. These committee meetings, therefore, will be annual, county Common School Conventions. The choice of a member of the Board will generally occupy but a short period, and the residue of the session will doubtless be devoted to lectures and discussions on the various interests of Common Schools.

At these electoral conventions, teachers and the friends of Common Schools generally will doubtless be invited to attend; and, considering the classes of persons who will naturally be assembled on such an occasion, it would be impossible to imagine a more appropriate body, before whom to expose existing defects in the school system of the State, and to devise remedies for their removal. Any event which can bring the school committees of a county together once a year, for consultation and mutual encouragement, must be attended with the happiest results.

The Board is to appoint a Secretary. All the offices are annual, but to be held until a successor is chosen. An annual Report is to be made to the Legislature by the Board.

The duties of the Board and of its Secretary may be comprehended in a single line; — *they are to make poor schools good, and good schools better.*

The State of Maine was, until recently, an integral part of Massachusetts, — bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. A separation for political and administrative purposes has effected no disunion of interests or alienation of regards. It is with peculiar pleasure, therefore, that we see her adopting a measure better calculated than any other to secure the good she has and to attain the good to which she is entitled.

DEDICATION OF THE BRIDGEWATER STATE NORMAL SCHOOLHOUSE.

WE had intended to prepare an account of the Dedication, on the 19th ult., of the new State Normal Schoolhouse at Bridgewater; but other engagements, — especially the necessity of making arrangements for the Teachers' Institutes, and of attending the one lately held at New Salem, — have prevented. The following, taken from the Boston Mercantile Journal, contains the most extended account we have seen. Making some slight alterations in the report of the Journal, we transfer it to our columns, with an expression, however, of regret, that it had not contained more of what was said by others, and less of what was said by ourselves.

MR. SLEEPER; Having been invited to witness the ceremonies at the dedication of the new edifice just erected for the accommodation of the State Normal School at Bridgewater, and having been greatly interested in the exercises, I shall endeavor to comply with your request, that I would furnish some account of them for the Journal; — although, except in regard to one address, I made no preparation for any such purpose.

The 19th of August was made on purpose for the occasion. It was just the day for comfort and enjoyment, and there was abundance of both. Early in the morning, two or three hundred of the present and past pupils of the school had collected, with an unusually large number of the friends of education from every part of the State. The Governor was there, the Hon. Mr. Bates, and the Rev. Mr. Hooker, of the Board of Education, and many clergymen, teachers, and professional gentlemen, whom I will not attempt to name. The new schoolroom was filled with pupils, but the procession of invited guests and citizens was ingeniously squeezed in. After an introductory prayer by the Rev. Joseph Allen, of Northborough, and the singing of an ode, written for the occasion, we believe, by the Rev. Mr. Rodman, — and well written and well sung it was, — the Hon. Mr. Bates delivered the Dedictory Address, in which the argument for the necessity of Normal Schools was irresistibly enforced, by the necessity of general education in a land so free as ours, — the necessity of a *good* education, — and the consequent need of competent and accomplished teachers, — men trained to the work, as men are trained to all other professions.

After the singing of another original hymn, the Governor addressed the pupils in the plain, unostentatious, but earnest and feeling manner peculiar to him; and we mistake if he ever did a better day's work in his life. By advice, by encouragement, by examples, he urged them to prosecute in earnest the all-important work they had undertaken; and the eager attention of the young teachers is the only guaranty needed to

insure a faithful recollection of the latter, and a devoted carrying out of the spirit of the Governor's exhortations.

The procession was then re-formed, and proceeded to the new meeting-house, where, after prayer by the Rev. Mr. Gay, an address was delivered by Amasa Walker, Esq., at the request of the Bridgewater Normal Association. The address was marked with sound sense, and replete with useful and practical views on the subject of education, and particularly on the preparation of competent teachers, who would abound, he thought, as soon as there was a demand for them. But he thought the public mind was not yet sufficiently awakened to the duty and policy of employing good teachers, at whatever cost, and he earnestly appealed to parents to consider the subject, and create the demand which would alone insure a supply. Although the third address, of an hour's length, to which the audience had listened, it was heard with pleasure, and spoken with effect.

The company, enlivened by an excellent band of music, then marched to the Town Hall, where a sumptuous collation was prepared for all the pupils and their numerous guests. Mr. Tillinghast, the able teacher of the school, presided, and contrived, in his peculiarly quiet and unpretending way, to make the company feel at home, and at liberty to speak and eat as if at home. After the silence which was induced, — not by corporal punishment, for we saw no excess, — but by such a diligent use of the teeth, as was inconsistent with any considerable activity of the tongue, the President, after some pleasant allusions to the Board of Education, gave as a toast: "The health of the Chairman of the Board." The Governor, thus called out, remonstrated, on the ground that, when he came there, he had distinctly agreed to speak at the dedication, or at the church, or at the feast; but he was only to speak once, and, having done so, this compulsion to speak again, reminded him of the *volunteer* soldier, who said he was *compelled* to enlist. The President then proposed:

"The health of the Secretary of the Board, who, by his zealous regard for the interests of the school, and by his frequent visits, had introduced the pupils to the brotherhood of Mann."

The hearty applause which followed this sentiment, obliged the Secretary, HON. HORACE MANN, to arise and speak for himself and for the Board. Of his remarks, which were in fact the true dedicatory address, the following copious notes will give the substance, although the spirit, the manner, and the surrounding circumstances, cannot be transferred to paper.

Mr. President; Among all the lights and shadows that have ever crossed my path, this day's radiance is the brightest. Two years ago, I would have been willing to compromise for ten years' work, as hard as any I had ever performed, to have been insured that, at the end of that period, I should see what

our eyes this day behold. We now witness the completion of a new and beautiful Normal Schoolhouse for the State Normal School at Bridgewater. One fortnight from to-morrow, another house, as beautiful as this, is to be dedicated at Westfield, for the State Normal School at that place. West Newton was already provided for by private munificence. Each Normal School then will occupy a house, neat, commodious, and well adapted to its wants; and the Principals of the schools will be relieved from the annoyance of keeping a Normal School in an *ab-Normal* house.

I shall not even advert to the painful causes which have hastened this most desirable consummation, — since what was meant for evil has resulted in so much good. Let me, however, say to you, as the moral of this result, that it strengthens in my own mind what I have always felt; and I hope it will strengthen, or create, in all *your* minds, a repugnance to that sickly and cowardly sentiment of the poet, which made him long

“For a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade,
Where rumor of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful wars,
Might never reach him more.”

There is oppression in the world which almost crushes the life out of humanity. There is deceit, which not only ensnares the unwary, but almost abolishes the security, and confidence, and delight, which rational and social beings ought to enjoy in their intercourse with each other. There are wars, and the question whether they are right or wrong tortures the good man a thousand times more than any successes or defeats of either belligerent. But the feeling which springs up spontaneously in my mind, and which I hope springs up spontaneously in your minds, my friends, in view of the errors, and calamities, and iniquities of the race, is, *not* to flee from the world, but to remain in it; *not* to hie away to forest solitudes or hermit cells, but to confront selfishness, and wickedness, and ignorance, at whatever personal peril, and to subdue and extirpate them, or to die in the attempt. Had it not been for a feeling like this among your friends, and the friends of the sacred cause of education in which you have enlisted, you well know that the Normal Schools of Massachusetts would have been put down, and that this day never would have shone to gladden our hearts and to reward our toils and sacrifices. Let no man who knows not what has been suffered, what has been borne and forborne, to bring to pass the present event, accuse me of an extravagance of joy.

Mr. President: I consider this event as marking an era in the progress of education, — which, as we all know, is the progress of civilization, — on this western continent and throughout the world. It is the completion of the first Normal School-

house ever erected in Massachusetts, — in the Union, — in this hemisphere. It belongs to that class of events which may happen once, but are incapable of being repeated.

I believe Normal Schools to be a new instrumentality in the advancement of the race. I believe that, without them, Free Schools themselves would be shorn of their strength and their healing power, and would at length become mere charity schools, and thus die out in fact and in form. Neither the art of printing, nor the trial by jury, nor a free press, nor free suffrage, can long exist, to any beneficial and salutary purpose, without schools for the training of teachers; for, if the character and qualifications of teachers be allowed to degenerate, the Free Schools will become pauper schools, and the pauper schools will produce pauper souls, and the free press will become a false and licentious press, and ignorant voters will become venal voters, and through the medium and guise of republican forms, an oligarchy of profligate and flagitious men will govern the land; nay, the universal diffusion and ultimate triumph of all-glorious Christianity itself must await the time when knowledge shall be diffused among men through the instrumentality of good schools. Coiled up in this institution, as in a spring, there is a vigor, whose uncoiling may wheel the spheres.

But this occasion brings to mind the past history of these schools, not less than it awakens our hopes and convinces our judgment respecting their future success.

I hold, sir, in my hand, a paper, which contains the origin, the source, the *punctum saliens*, of the Normal Schools of Massachusetts. [Here Mr. Mann read a note from the Hon. Edmund Dwight, dated March 10th, 1838, authorizing him, Mr. Mann, to say to the Legislature, that the sum of ten thousand dollars would be given by an individual for the preparation of teachers of Common Schools, provided the Legislature would give an equal sum. The reading was received with great applause.]

It will be observed, resumed Mr. Mann, that this note refers to a conversation held on the evening previous to its date. The time, the spot, the words of that conversation can never be erased from my soul. This day, triumphant over the past, auspicious for the future, then rose to my sight. By the auroral light of hope, I saw company after company go forth from the bosom of these institutions, like angel ministers, to spread abroad, over waste spiritual realms, the power of knowledge and the delights of virtue. Thank God, the enemies who have since risen up to oppose and malign us, did not cast their hideous shadows across that beautiful scene.

The proposition made to the Legislature was accepted, almost without opposition, in both branches; and on the third day of July, 1839, the first Normal School, consisting of only three pupils, was opened at Lexington, under the care of a

gentleman who now sits before me, — Mr. Cyrus Pierce, of Nantucket, — then of island, but now of continental fame. [This called forth great cheering, and Mr. Mann said he should sit down to give Mr. Pierce an opportunity to respond. Mr. Pierce arose under great embarrassment; starting at the sound of his name, and half doubting whether the eloquent Secretary had not intended to name some other person. He soon recovered, however, and in a very happy manner extricated himself from the "fix" in which the Secretary had placed him. He spoke of his children, the pupils of the first Normal School, and of the honorable competition which ought to exist between the several schools; and to the surprise, as well as regret, of all who heard him, he spoke of being admonished by infirmities which he could not mistake, that it was time for him to retire from the profession. The audience felt as if, for once in his life, this excellent teacher had threatened to do wrong. He then told an amusing anecdote of a professor who retained his office too long, and was toasted by the students in the words of Dr. Watts, — "The Rev. Dr. ———, Hush, my babe, lie still and slumber." And then he sat down amidst the sincere plaudits of the company, who seemed to think he was not "so plucky old" as he wished to appear.]

I say, said Mr. Mann, on resuming, that, though the average number of Mr. Pierce's school is now from sixty to eighty; and though this school, at the present term, consists of one hundred pupils, yet the first term of the first school opened with *three* pupils only. The truth is, though it may seem a paradox to say so, the Normal Schools had to come to prepare a way for themselves, and to show, by practical demonstration, what they were able to accomplish. Like Christianity itself, had they waited till the world at large called for them, or was ready to receive them, they would never have come.

In September, 1839, two other Normal Schools were established, one at Barre, in the county of Worcester, since removed to Westfield, in the county of Hampden; and the other at this place, whose only removal has been a constant moving onwards and upwards, to higher and higher degrees of prosperity and usefulness.

In tracing down the history of these schools to the present time, I prefer to bring into view, rather the agencies that have helped, than the obstacles which have opposed them.

I say, then, that I believe Massachusetts to have been the only State in the Union, where Normal Schools could have been established; or where, if established, they would have been allowed to continue. At the time they were established, five or six thousand teachers were annually engaged in our Common Schools; and probably nearly as many more were looking forward to the same occupation. These incumbents and expectants, together with their families and circles of rela-

tives and acquaintances, would probably have constituted the greater portion of active influence on school affairs in the State; and had they, as a body, yielded to the invidious appeals that were made to them by a few agents and emissaries of evil, they might have extinguished the Normal Schools, as a whirlwind puts out a taper. I honor the great body of Common School teachers in Massachusetts, for the magnanimity they have displayed on this subject. I know that many of them have said, almost in so many words, and, what is nobler, they have acted as they have said: — "We are conscious of our deficiencies; we are grateful for any means that will supply them, — nay, we are ready to retire from our places when better teachers can be found to fill them. We derive, it is true, our daily bread from school-keeping, but it is better that our bodies should be pinched with hunger than that the souls of children should starve for want of mental nourishment; and we should be unworthy of the husks which the swine do eat, if we could prefer our own emolument or comfort to the intellectual and moral culture of the rising generation. We give you our hand and our heart for the glorious work of improving the schools of Massachusetts, while we scorn the baseness of the men who would appeal to our love of gain, or of ease, to seduce us from the path of duty." This statement does no more than justice to the noble conduct of the great body of teachers in Massachusetts. To be sure, there always have been some who have opposed the Normal Schools, and who will, probably, continue to oppose them as long as they live, lest they themselves should be superseded by a class of competent teachers. These are they who would arrest education where it is; because they cannot keep up with it, or overtake it in its onward progress. But the wheels of education are rolling on, and they who will not go with them must go under them.

The Normal Schools were supposed by some to stand in an antagonistic relation to academies and select schools; and some teachers of academies and select schools have opposed them. They declare that they can make as good teachers as Normal Schools can. But, sir, academies and select schools have existed in this State, in great numbers, for more than half a century. A generation of school teachers does not last, at the extent, more than three or four years; so that a dozen generations of teachers have passed through our Public Schools within the last fifty years. Now, if the academies and high schools can supply an adequate number of school teachers, why have they not done it? We have waited half a century for them. Let them not complain of us, because we are unwilling to wait half a century more. Academies are good in their place; colleges are good in their place. Both have done invaluable service to the cause of education. The standard of intelligence is vastly higher now, than it would have been without their aid;

but they have not provided a sufficiency of competent teachers; and if they perform their appropriate duties hereafter, as they have done heretofore, they cannot supply them; and I cannot forbear, Mr. President, to express my firm conviction, that if the work is to be left in their hands, we never can have a supply of competent teachers for our Common Schools, without a perpetual Pentecost of miraculous endowments.

But if any teacher of an academy had a right to be jealous of the Normal Schools, it was a gentleman now before me, who, at the time when the Bridgewater Normal School came into his town, and planted itself by the path which led to his door, and offered to teach gratuitously such of the young men and women attending his school, as had proposed to become teachers of Common Schools, instead of opposing it, acted with a high and magnanimous regard to the great interests of humanity. So far from opposing, he gave his voice, his vote, and his purse, for the establishment of the school, whose benefits, you, my young friends, have since enjoyed. (Great applause.) Don't applaud yet, said Mr. Mann, for I have better things to tell of him than this. In the winter session of the Legislature of 1840, it is well known that a powerful attack was made, in the House of Representatives, upon the Board of Education, the Normal Schools, and all the improvements which had then been commenced, and which have since produced such beneficent and abundant fruits. It was proposed to abolish the Board of Education, and to go back to the condition of things in 1837. It was proposed to abolish the Normal Schools, and to throw back with indignity, into the hands of Mr. Dwight, the money he had given for their support.

That attack combined all the elements of opposition which selfishness and intolerance had created, — whether latent or patent. It availed itself of the argument of expense. It appealed invidiously to the pride of teachers. It menaced Prussian despotism as the natural consequence of imitating Prussia in preparing teachers for schools. It fomented political partisanship. It invoked religious bigotry. It united them all into one phalanx, animated by various motives, but intent upon a single object. The gentleman to whom I have referred was then a member of the House of Representatives, and Chairman of the Committee on Education, and he, in company with Mr. Thomas A. Greene, of New Bedford, made a minority report, and during the debate which followed, he defended the Board of Education so ably, and vindicated the necessity of Normal Schools and other improvements so convincingly, that their adversaries were foiled, and these institutions were saved. The gentleman to whom I refer is the Hon. JOHN A. SHAW, now Superintendent of schools in New Orleans.

[Prolonged cheers: —and the pause made by Mr. Mann, afforded an opportunity to Mr. Shaw, in his modest and unpretending manner, to disclaim the active

and efficient agency which he had had in rescuing the Normal Schools from destruction before they had had an opportunity to commend themselves to the public by their works; — but all this only increased the animation of the company, who appeared never before to have had a chance to pay off any portion of their debt of gratitude. After silence was restored, Mr. Shaw said that every passing year enforced upon him the lesson of the importance and value of experience in school-keeping. Long as he had taught, he felt himself improved by the teachings of observation and practice; and he must therefore express his joy and gratitude at the establishment and the prosperity of the school at that place, whatever might be the personal consequences to himself.]

Nor, continued Mr. Mann, is this the only instance of noble and generous conduct which we are bound this day to acknowledge. I see before me a gentleman who, though occupying a station in the educational world far above any of the calamities or the vicissitudes that can befall the Common Schools, — though, pecuniarily considered, it is a matter of entire indifference to him whether the Common Schools flourish or decline, — yet, from the beginning, and especially in the crisis to which I have just adverted, came to our rescue, and gave all his influence, as a citizen and as a teacher, to the promotion of our cause; and whom those who may resort hither, from year to year, so long as this building shall stand, will have occasion to remember, not only with warm emotions of the heart, but, during the wintry season of the year, with warm sensations of the body also.* I refer to Mr. GEO. B. EMERSON. [Mr. Emerson was now warmly cheered, until he rose, and in a heartfelt address of a few moments, expressed his interest in the school, and in the cause of education, which he begged the young teachers not to consider as limited to this imperfect stage of our being.]

These, said Mr. Mann, are some of the incidents of our early history. The late events which have resulted in the generous donations of individuals, and in the patronage of the Legislature, for the erection of this, and another edifice at Westfield, as a residence and a home for the Normal Schools, — these events, I shall consult my own feelings, and perhaps I may add, the dignity and forbearance which belong to a day of triumph, in passing by without remark.

[This part of the history, however, was not allowed to be lost. As soon as the Secretary had taken his seat, the Rev. Mr. Waterston, who had been instrumental in getting up the subscription to erect the two schoolhouses, arose, and eloquently completed the history. He stated, in brief, that the idea of providing suitable buildings for the Normal Schools originated with some thirty or forty friends of popular education, who, without distinction of sect or party, had met, in Boston, in the winter of 1844-5, to express their sympathy with Mr. Mann in the vexatious conflict which he had so successfully maintained; and who desired, in some suitable way, to express their approbation of his course in the conduct of the great and difficult work of reforming our Common Schools. At this meeting, it was at first proposed to bestow upon Mr. Mann some token evincive of the personal and public regard of its members; but, at a subsequent meeting, it was suggested that it would be far more grateful and acceptable to him to furnish some substantial and efficient aid in carrying forward the great work in which he had engaged, and in removing those obstacles and hin-

* Mr. Emerson has furnished, at his own expense, the furnace by which the new schoolhouse is to be warmed.

derances both to his own success and to the progress of the cause, which nothing but an expenditure of money could effect. No way seemed so well adapted to this purpose as the placing of the Normal Schools upon a firm and lasting basis, by furnishing them with suitable and permanent buildings; and the persons present thereupon pledged themselves to furnish \$5000, and to ask the Legislature to furnish a like sum for this important purpose. The grant was cheerfully made by the Legislature, whose good will has since been further expressed by a liberal grant, to meet the expenses of those temporary Normal Schools, called Teachers' Institutes. Mr. Mann, who had not yet taken his seat, then continued as follows:]

I have, my young friends, former and present pupils of the school, but a single word more to say to you on this occasion. It is a word of caution and admonition. You have enjoyed, or are enjoying, advantages superior to most of those engaged in our Common Schools. Never pride yourselves upon these advantages. Think of them often, but always as motives to greater diligence and exertion, not as points of superiority. As you go forth, after having enjoyed the bounty of the State, you will probably be subjected to a rigid examination. Submit to it without complaint. More will sometimes be demanded of you than is reasonable. Bear it meekly, and exhaust your time and strength in performing your duties, rather than in vindicating your rights. Be silent, even when you are misrepresented. Turn aside when opposed, rather than confront opposition with resistance. Bear and forbear, not defending yourselves, so much as trusting to your works to defend you. Yet, in counselling you thus, I would not be understood to be a total non-resistant; — a perfectly passive, non-elastic sand-bag, in society; but I would not have you resist until the blow be aimed, not so much at you, as, through you, at the sacred cause of human improvement, in which you are engaged, — a point at which forbearance would be allied to crime.

To the young ladies who are here, — teachers and those who are preparing themselves to become teachers, — I would say, that, if there be any human being whom I ever envied, it is they. As I have seen them go, day after day, and month after month, with inexhaustible cheerfulness and gentleness, to their obscure, unobserved, and I might almost say, unrequited labors, I have thought that I would rather fill their place, than be one in the proudest triumphal procession that ever received the acclamations of a city, though I myself were the crowned victor of the ceremonies. May Heaven forgive them for the only sin which, as I hope, they ever commit, — that of tempting me to break the commandment, by coveting the blissfulness and purity of their quiet and secluded virtues.

We regret that we have not room for one or two excellent original odes, prepared for the occasion.

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